

JOURNAL OF COMMERCE
29 January 1981

STAT

Restoring CIA Vital To Defense

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During the next few weeks President Reagan will have to come to grips with the budget inherited from President Carter that will generate a deficit of about \$90 billion and a tax cut without budget cuts that will increase this deficit to about \$100 billion.

The most heroic budget ax-wielding cannot reduce the budget deficit the first year by more than \$30 billion. In that light, the defense increases he has promised are going to have to be more modest than he had hoped. U.S. military inferiority vis-a-vis the Soviet Union cannot be redressed, therefore, sooner than four or five years.

In the interim, thus, the CIA must play a critical role in delaying Soviet expansionism. How ready is the CIA to do this job and what must be done?

The CIA today has a mere shell of the capability it had in the 1960s and early 1970s.

Changes in the law were enacted which curtailed the ability of the CIA to engage in clandestine actions in other countries. These covert activities were further curtailed by the ruthless pruning of hundreds of senior officials from the covert side.

Further, the CIA's ability to guard against Soviet penetration of U.S. intelligence was hamstrung by the firing of the legendary Jim Angleton, our premier counterintelligence expert, and his senior associates.

In the intelligence evaluation field, CIA professionalism has been badly hurt by the requirements, beginning with Kissinger's, to produce evaluations which are politically acceptable to policy-makers, rather than truly objective.

As a result of all these developments, morale and mission performance at the CIA are at an all-time low.

The new director of the CIA, William Casey, is an old hand at clandestine operations from his World War II Office of Strategic Services days. He has had to analyze and use intelligence in previous government jobs, and has learned how to operate within the bureaucracy of Washington. To turn the CIA around, Bill Casey must:

- Persuade Congress (while it retains requisite oversight) to revise the statutes to restore greater secrecy and to broaden the authority of the CIA to operate clandestinely in foreign countries, in support of U.S. interests.

- Win revision of the presidential directives to restore flexibility to CIA clandestine operations.

- Win support for budgetary increases to build up the greatly weakened covert and counterintelligence staffs.

- Insist on the right of all government intelligence analysts to produce objective intelligence evaluations, regardless of their political or policy implications.

- Restore the president's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, which served as an independent check on U.S. intelligence work until President Carter abolished it.

Only when these actions have been initiated will President Reagan be able to receive the accurate, objective intelligence and the political forecasts and conditions for planning how to deal with Soviet/Cuban/Libyan subversion, and thereby protect U.S. interests in the Third World.

Only with a fully revitalized clandestine capability in the CIA — which will take time — will President Reagan have the necessary tools to undo or make much more expensive even the more visible current signs of Soviet expansionism and subversions.

Covert operations cannot always be successful. In the Carter era, they were seldom tried. It is much more difficult to achieve success while U.S. military forces are inferior to the Soviets and, therefore, unable to back up covert operations by deterring Soviet force interventions. But such operations cannot even be considered until the professional capability for such operations is restored within the CIA.

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